

The Great Leap

The world the British colonists inherited was ruled by kings, hereditary aristocrats, and wealthy gentlemen. Then, in the year 1776, Americans decided to change that world. They would do without a king or aristocrats. They would create a new government based solely on “the people.”



George III

“The horse America, throwing his Master,” 1779

Courtesy of Library of Congress

But who would really count as “the people,” and how would it all work? Should wealthy and educated gentlemen still dominate the government? Could a new, representative form of government truly represent the interests and views of common men and women? How should those people participate to make their voices heard?

Ever since the Revolution, Americans have debated these questions.



The Boston Tea Party

Detail from "The Destruction of Tea at Boston Harbor," New York, around 1846

Courtesy of Library of Congress

Hours & Admission

Open every day, except December 25, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Admission is free and no tickets are required.

Location & Contact

1300 Constitution Ave NW,
Washington, DC 20560 <<https://www.google.com/maps/place/smithsonian+national+museum+of+american+history/@38.8912835,-77.0322449,17z>>

Contact Information </about/contact>

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